# STAR WARS™

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49

# TRADE FEDERATION ARMOURED ASSAULT TANK

*Frontline of the Neimoidian attack force*

*Droid Commander OOM-9* *The Battle of Naboo*

DeAGOSTINI

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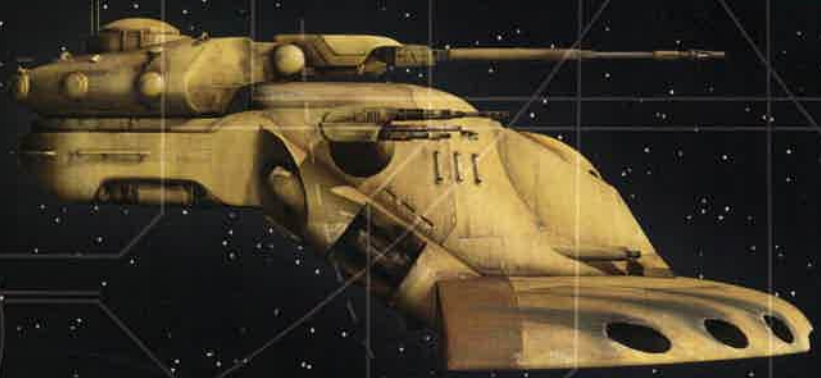
STAR WARS

Designed and built by Baktoid Armour Workshop, the repulsorlift Armoured Assault Tank was typical of Baktoid's work for the Trade Federation. The AAT had the animalistic look of much of Baktoid's output, and was fearsomely armed and armoured. Even under the control of the B1 battle droid crews, this was an effective weapon, particularly when deployed in large numbers.

"ALL CANNONS! FIRE ON THOSE TANKS!"

CLONE COMMANDER REX ON CHRISTOPHSIS



# THE AAT

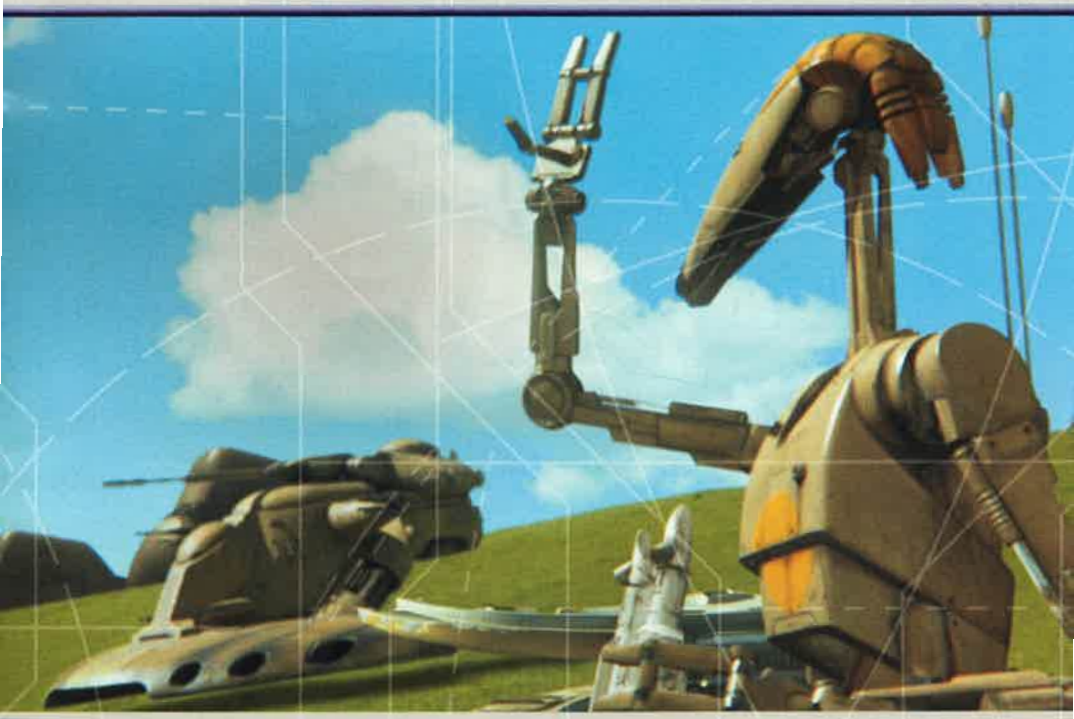
## TRADE FEDERATION TANK

**Despite being a mass-produced weapon, made as cheaply as possible and most usually manned by inefficient battle droid crews, the Armoured Assault Tank was an excellent medium assault repulsor tank, heavily armoured and very well armed. Able to operate both as a battlefield tank and as a patrol vehicle, it served the Trade Federation well.**

Baktoid Armour Workshop's chief designer had an obsessive love of tanks. This fact is self-evident in the design and construction of the Armoured Assault Tank, one of the most effective weapons in the Trade Federation military. As with many of the starships and weapons that Viceroy Nute Gunray commissioned on the orders of Sith Lord Darth Sidious, the Trade Federation first deployed its AATs for combat testing in battles against pirate groups in the Outer Rim Territories. As a result, by the time of the invasion of Naboo, the AAT had already proved its worth.

### All Up Front

Designed to be carried, 114 at a time, alongside MTTs in the cavernous holds of the Trade



Federation landing craft, the AATs shared certain features with the hulking Multi Troop Transports. Both had heavy and proportionally very thick frontal armour, with the intention that it be used to defend against attacks and to smash through obstacles. The lower, sled-like half of the tank featured the heaviest armour plating, but also housed the repulsor coils, six projectile launchers and their ordnance. Once the shells were used up, the entire bottom section could be quickly disengaged and replaced back at a supply base to re-arm the tank. As was common on Baktoid designs, vital components for the tank were at the rear. This included the quad-chamber multi-reactor, the power generator and convertors for the repulsorlifts, comms and sensor equipment, and the main hatch through which the four crew droids boarded. Even the commander of the tank sat right at the rear of the vehicle, high up in the top turret.

## Major Firepower

For a nominally medium tank, the AAT packed major firepower, as it featured 11 weapons. The command turret featured a heavy laser cannon, operated by the tank commander. Flanking the main body of the tank were two laser blasters, under which were twin laser range-finders. The blasters projected out on 'stalks' so that up to six battle droids – three on each side – could hitch a ride on a patrolling tank. Ahead of where those droids would stand, again flanking the main body of the tank, were two short-range anti-personnel blasters. The armoured base held the six projectile launchers. They could draw on three different types of ammunition: high explosive shells for destroying buildings, armour-piercing shells for use against tanks, and high-energy shells for anti-personnel assaults.

# THE INVASION OF NABOO

## ASSAULT WEAPONS

**During the Trade Federation invasion of Naboo, many thousands of Armoured Assault Tanks were used. The tanks performed well, with the Trade Federation only suffering a defeat because of the limitations of its droid control systems.**

During the initial invasion of Naboo, all of the Trade Federation military performed as intended. While the lumbering MTTs ploughed their way through the trees toward the Naboo settlements and the capital, Theed, the more agile AATs smashed their way through walls to root out pockets of resistance. The Naboo capitulated quickly, although the resistance movement that formed following the escape of the Queen quickly got the measure of the AAT – learning where its weak points were and using the powerful medium blaster cannon on the Gian speeder to punch through the lighter armour just below the forward hatch, destroying the AAT with one shot. The Naboo resistance also discovered that the underside of the tank was the AAT's weakest point, and used weapons that exploited this.

"Ouch time."

**Captain Roos Tarpals at the Battle of the Grassy Plains**

### The Battle of Naboo

When the Gungan Grand Army drew the main force of the occupying Trade Federation army into battle on the grassy plains beyond Theed, a great many AATs were deployed. They were better suited to the open ground – on the confined streets of Theed they had caused a great deal of damage as their droid drivers patrolled the city. The AATs main laser cannon could not penetrate the Gungan shield, so battle droids and droidekas were sent in first. When the shield came down, the AATs began to do real damage. However, the plasma weapons that the Grand Army used proved highly effective against the tanks, crippling and destroying many of them. When the droid control ship was destroyed, the whole Trade Federation army shut down, and the AATs ground to a halt.

# CAPTAIN ROOS TARPALS

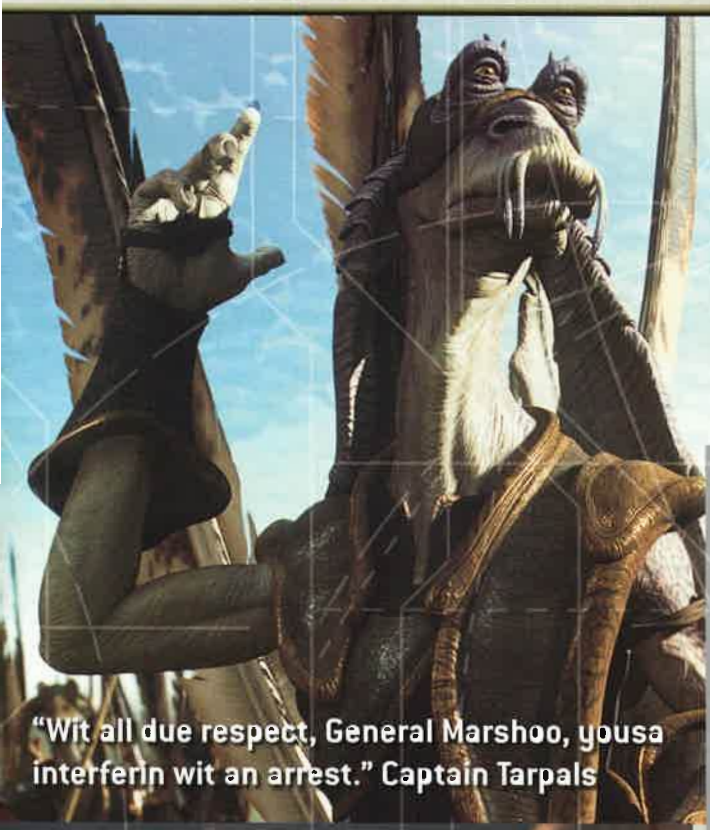
## THE GUNGAN GRAND ARMY

**For just under a hundred years, the Gungan Grand Army had been largely ceremonial. Despite this, the Gungan people were hugely proud of their warrior traditions, and none more so than the stoic Roos Tarpals. An able fighter and a respected leader, he had one failing – a soft spot for Jar Jar Binks.**

Surprisingly, Roos Tarpals had a rebellious, often violent youth. He led a gang of thieves who carried out a number of small-scale heists on the fringes of Otoh Gunga. No-one was ever hurt, however – Tarpals' rebellious streak only went so far. It was during this time that Roos met the young Jar Jar Binks. Tarpals saw Binks' potential as a distraction for any patrolling security guards but, unlike the other members of the gang, he also became Jar Jar's friend. Eventually, Jar Jar's innocent, naïve appreciation of all around him made Tarpals reconsider the direction that his life was taking. He left the gang and signed up with the Gungan Grand Army.

### In The Army Now

As a militiagung, Roos Tarpals worked with officers of the Otoh Gunga Security Forces to protect the city from marauding sea creatures, and the people from non-Gungan smugglers and from gangs of thieves less civically-minded than his own group had been. Tarpals showed real ability as a warrior and as a leader, and rose to the rank of Captain in the Gungan Grand Army – the first in his family to attain such a high rank. Though he remained a ranking officer in the Army, Tarpals shifted his service to join the Otoh Gunga Security Forces. His reputation for honesty, steadfast pursuit of his duties and straight talking saw him win the respect of many high-ranking Gungans, including Boss Rugor Nass. However, the same traits also gained him



"Wit all due respect, General Marshoo, yousa interferin wit an arrest." Captain Tarpals

PROFILE

Captain Roos Tarpals

**Homeworld**
Naboo

**Species**
Otolla Gungan

**Gender**
Male

**Height**
2.24m

**Affiliation**
Otoh Gunga

enemies – particularly amongst those Gungans who saw service in the Grand Army as merely a form of social advancement. While he was serving with the Otoh Gunga Security Forces, Tarpals again encountered Jar Jar Binks – who was soon to test Tarpals' patience to breaking point.

### 'The Death of Captain Tarpals'

Even before his promotion to Captain, Tarpals attracted the respect of his superiors. It allowed him to make recommendations on the way certain matters were handled, and certain individuals were dealt with. This was good news for Jar Jar Binks, even though he would never fully understand how much he owed Tarpals. Roos was there to make excuses for Jar Jar on many occasions. He even managed to have Boss Nass himself insist that Binks was given jobs in some of the municipal projects Nass had sponsored. Frustratingly, Jar Jar messed things up each and every time, though his lack of malice always made Tarpals want to cover for him. As a result, Roos's fellow Security Force officers dubbed Jar Jar 'The Death of Tarpals'. The inevitable 'ouch time' finally came when Binks was given a job in the kitchen of Boss Nass's Otoh Gunga mansion. After blowing up an oven, cracking the bubble-space wall in the process, Jar Jar wrecked Nass's luxury heyblibber sub. The furious Nass ordered the newly promoted Captain Tarpals to arrest Jar Jar and take him away. Binks was to be banished, forever. Even Tarpals couldn't get Jar Jar out of this one, and any attempt to do so would have damaged his career.

**"Jar Jar! Usen da booma!"**

**Captain Tarpals**

## Grand Army Training

**Captain Roos Tarpals had always been a natural fighter. As part of the training he received in the Grand Army, he was trained to use boomas (plasma-filled energy 'grenades') and a personal energy shield. In the Otoh Gunga Security Force, he learned to ride a Kaadu and wield a double-bladed electropole. His armour came with the job, along with a sizeable pay-packet.**

Reluctantly, Captain Tarpals took Jar Jar into exile, knowing his old friend was unlikely to survive.

It was an astonished and angered Tarpals who was to later find Jar Jar wandering Otoh Gunga with two human strangers. The Captain had no choice but to take Jar Jar to Boss Nass.

### Surprise Release

Expecting his friend to be executed, Tarpals was even more surprised when Nass let Binks go. The strangers had come to bring a warning of an invading droid army, and Tarpals was soon involved in fighting that army – during the evacuation of Otoh Gunga and later as one of the Grand Army leaders at the Battle of the Grassy Plains. Though technically under Bombad General Jar Jar's command, Tarpals did what he could to keep Binks out of trouble during the battle. Even here, Jar Jar Binks managed to cause one accident after another, leading to Tarpals and himself being captured. Only the destruction of the droid army's control ship saved the Gungans. Jar Jar Binks had just managed to avoid being the very literal death of Captain Tarpals.

# C-9979 LANDING CRAFT

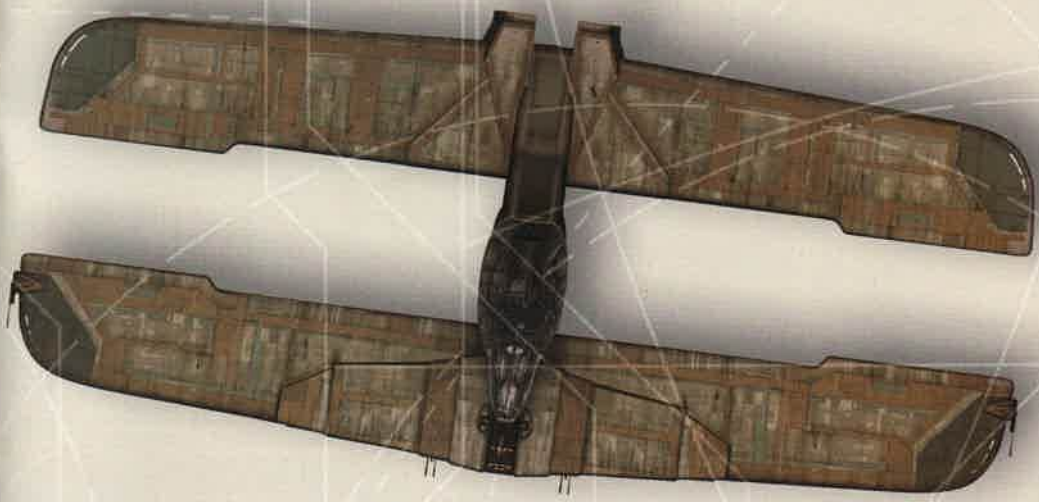
## TRADE FEDERATION INVASION VESSEL

**Haor Chall Engineering was given the contract to design and build the starships that the Trade Federation required as part of their military build-up. One key component was the landing craft that would ferry troops and vehicles to planetary battlegrounds.**

The Trade Federation needed to keep its militarisation as quiet as possible. As a result, Haor Chall designed the C-9979 landing craft to resemble the commercial barges that the Federation already had in use. The C-9979s were huge ships with 370m wingspans. The massive wings were so large that no alloy in existence could support their weight, let alone the weight of all the cargo the wings contained. As a result, tensor fields held the wings up, and clamped them to the fuselage. While in transit aboard Trade Federation battleships, the C-9979s were stored disassembled, so as to prevent damage due to structural stress. They were only assembled at the last minute, just before they were to be loaded and make their ponderous descent to some unfortunate planet.

### Deadly Cargo

For the invasion of Naboo, the C-9979 landing craft commonly carried 11 Multi-Troop Transports, 28 Platoon Attack Craft and 114 Armoured Assault Tanks. All of the MTTs and PACs came ready-loaded with their B1 battle droids, and the AATs were fully crewed. On landing, a small flight of STAPs was normally deployed from the C-9979s to patrol and secure the immediate area. The landing craft were armed, but only lightly, so they required starfighter escort to guarantee their safety. Once the cargo was unloaded, the C-9979s acted as resupply and garage facilities until more permanent base installations could be established.



## C-9979 Landing Craft PROFILE

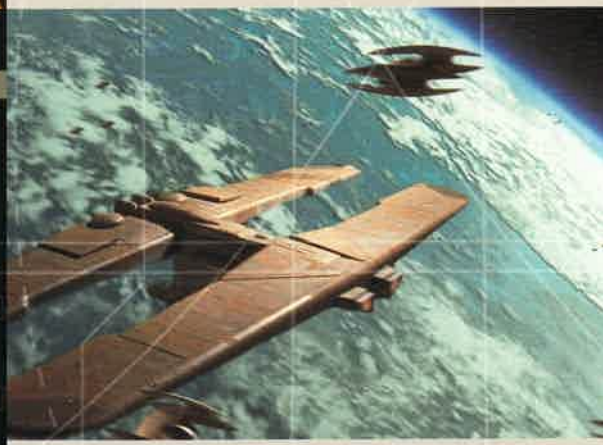
**Type**
Landing craft

**Manufacturer**
Haor Chall Engineering

**Size**
370m wide

**Weapons**
4x wingtip laser cannon,
4x laser cannon turrets
(capital-ship scale)

**Affiliation**
Trade Federation, CIS



# TRADE FEDERATION AAT

## ARMOURED ASSAULT TANK

Trade Federation AATs were commanded by OOM-series commander droids. During the invasion of Naboo, they were slaved to a droid control ship. This meant their reaction time to new situations was very slow, resulting in AATs firing on fleeing civilians before the control ship could send orders to stop them. The Trade Federation felt that such incidents were infrequent enough to be acceptable.

# TRADE FEDERATION ARMOURED ASSAULT TANK

**Type**
Repulsorlift tank

**Manufacturer**
Baktoid Armour Workshop

**Length**
9.75metres

**Max speed**
55km/h

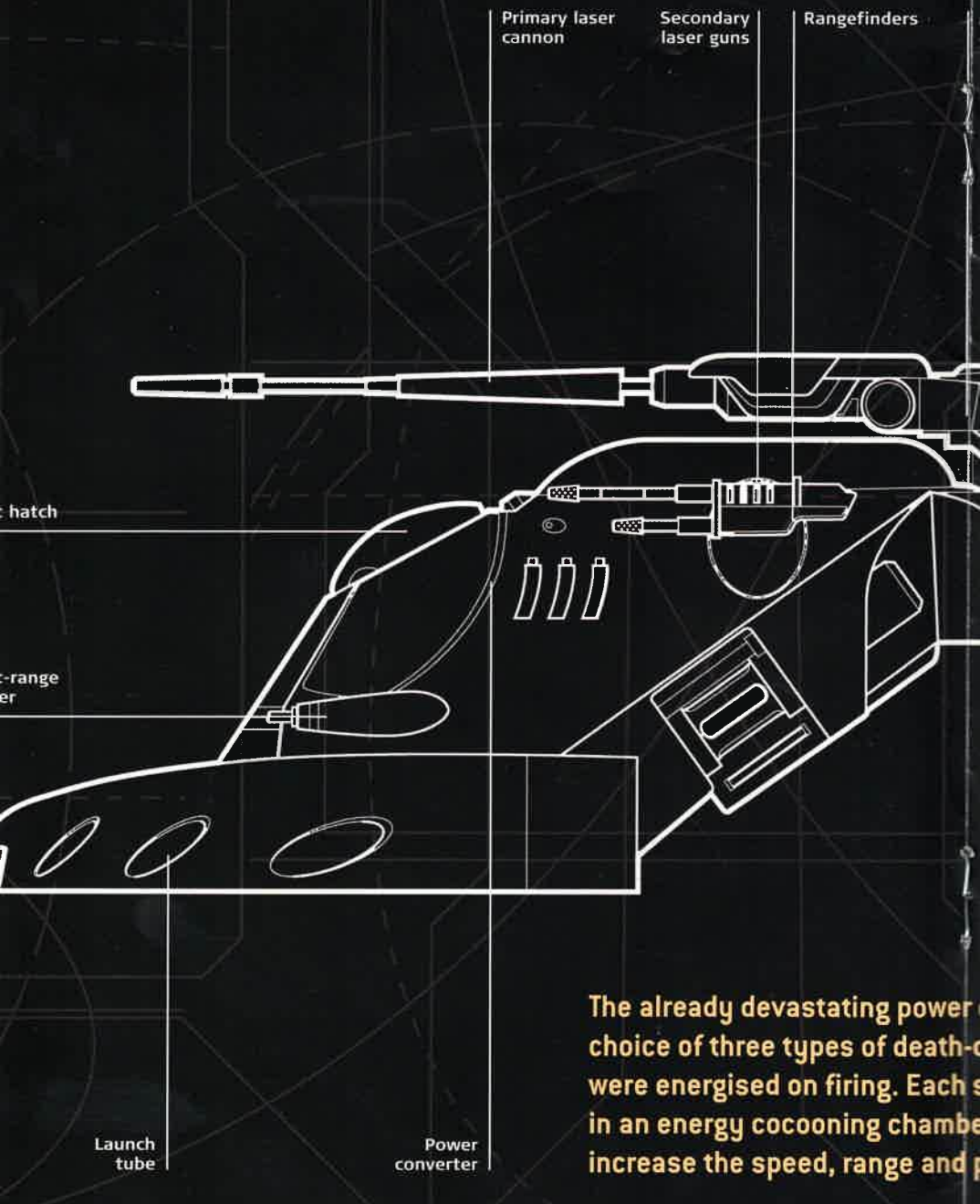
**Weapons**
1x Heavy laser cannon turret, 2x laser blasters, 2x short-range anti-personnel laser blasters, 6x energised-shell projectile launchers

**Crew**
1x pilot, 2x gunner, 1x commander
Passengers: 6 (using handholds on exterior, 3 on each side)

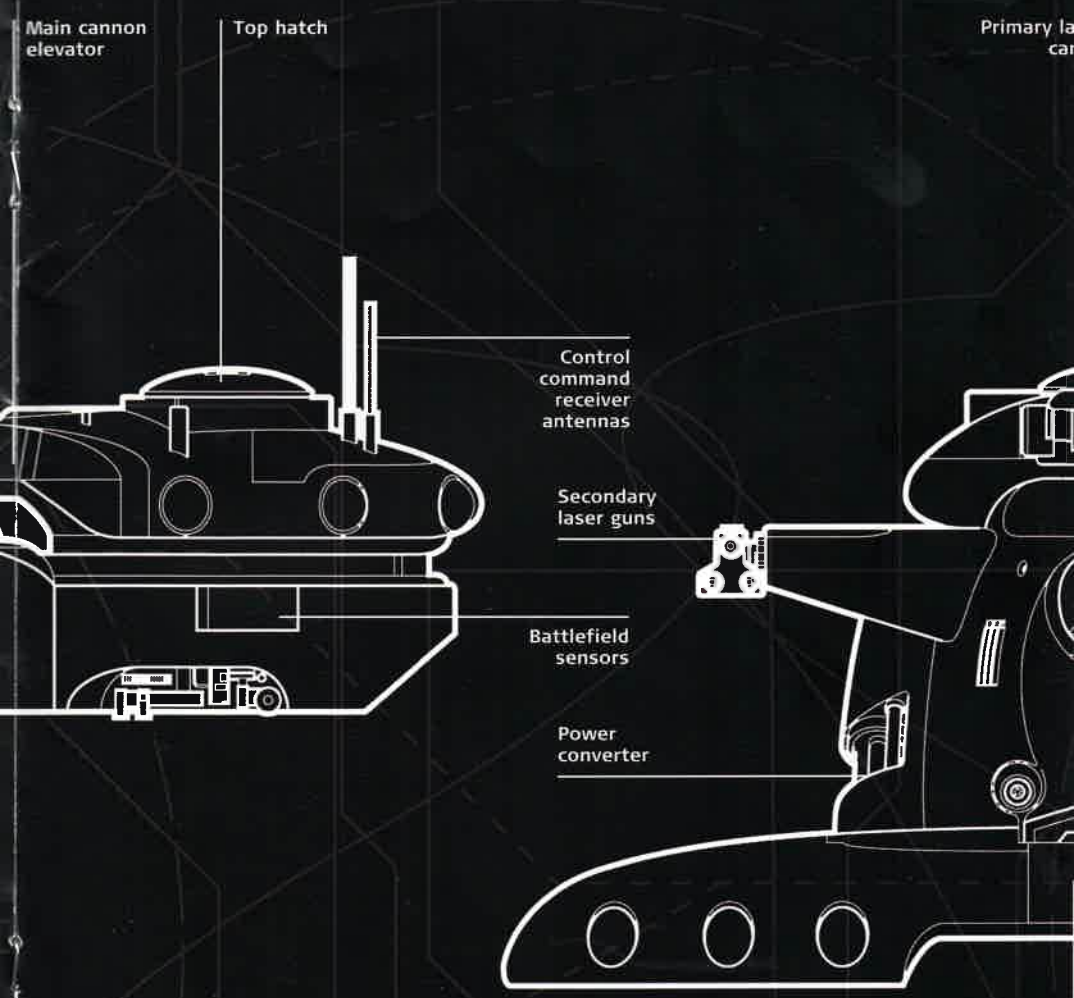
**Affiliation**
Trade Federation, Confederacy of Independent Systems

Front

Short-
blaste




The already devastating power
choice of three types of death-
were energised on firing. Each
in an energy cocooning chambe
increase the speed, range and




er of the AATs' six projectile launchers and their impressive
h-dealing ordnance was further increased by the way the shells
h shell, on being fired, was surrounded with high-energy plasma
ber built into its launch tube. The plasma reduced air friction to
d penetration of the shell.

aser
nnon

Top hatch

Control
command
receiver

Short-range
blaster

Front hatch

# OOM-9

## COMMANDER OF THE TRADE FEDERATION ARMY ON NABOO

**The Neimoidian leaders of the Trade Federation invasion of Naboo were a notoriously cowardly lot. Staying safely in orbit, they sent a massive droid army down to the surface of the planet, led by the expendable B1 battle droid OOM-9.**

OOM-9 began 'life' as just one of millions of B1 battle droids rolling off the Baktoid Combat Automata production lines. His production group was assigned to command duties, and received some additional programming. However, the essentials of what would make him a commander rather than just a standard infantry unit were held in the systems of the droid control computer. At this time, the Neimoidians did not like to afford their battle droids any true autonomy – a fact that ultimately doomed OOM-9.

### Picked Out

Ahead of the Invasion of Naboo, OOM-9 was selected almost at random to be the senior command droid to lead the Trade Federation forces on Naboo. Referred to as Captain by his Neimoidian leaders, OOM-9 received a small amount of additional programming, but was then quickly sent down to Naboo when the arrival of a pair of Jedi ambassadors accelerated the Trade Federation plans. Receiving his orders directly from Nute Gunray, OOM-9 led the droid forces in attacking three smaller Naboo settlements, before advancing on the capital of Theed, securing it and the Naboo leadership. Only with the Naboo thoroughly subjugated did Gunray and Rune Haako descend to the planet to gloat. Later, OOM-9 led droid forces to uncover the Gungan settlements. Meeting only token rear-guard resistance, OOM-9's forces devastated Otoh Gunga. Then, with most of the planet under Trade Federation control, OOM-9's forces were drawn into open battle when a Gungan army was spotted advancing on Theed. While OOM-9 defeated the Gungans, a battle in space sealed his, and the invasion's, fate. Anakin Skywalker destroyed the droid control ship, deactivating OOM-9 and his entire army.

## In Command!

**OOM-9 began as a basic B1 battle droid. His later programming, plus the assistance of the droid control ship in orbit, allowed him to gather tactical information, process reports, and plan accordingly. His unique backpack gave him an advanced power supply and communications package. This backpack was unnecessary when OOM-9 was in his command AAT vehicle. OOM-9's tank carried additional armour and weapons to protect the droid commander. After the Naboo debacle, commander droids were granted more autonomy – all of it too late for OOM-9.**

PROFILE

OOM-9

**Type**
B1 battle droid commander

**Manufacturer**
Baktoid Combat Automata

**Height**
1.91m

**Affiliation**
Trade Federation

# NABOO

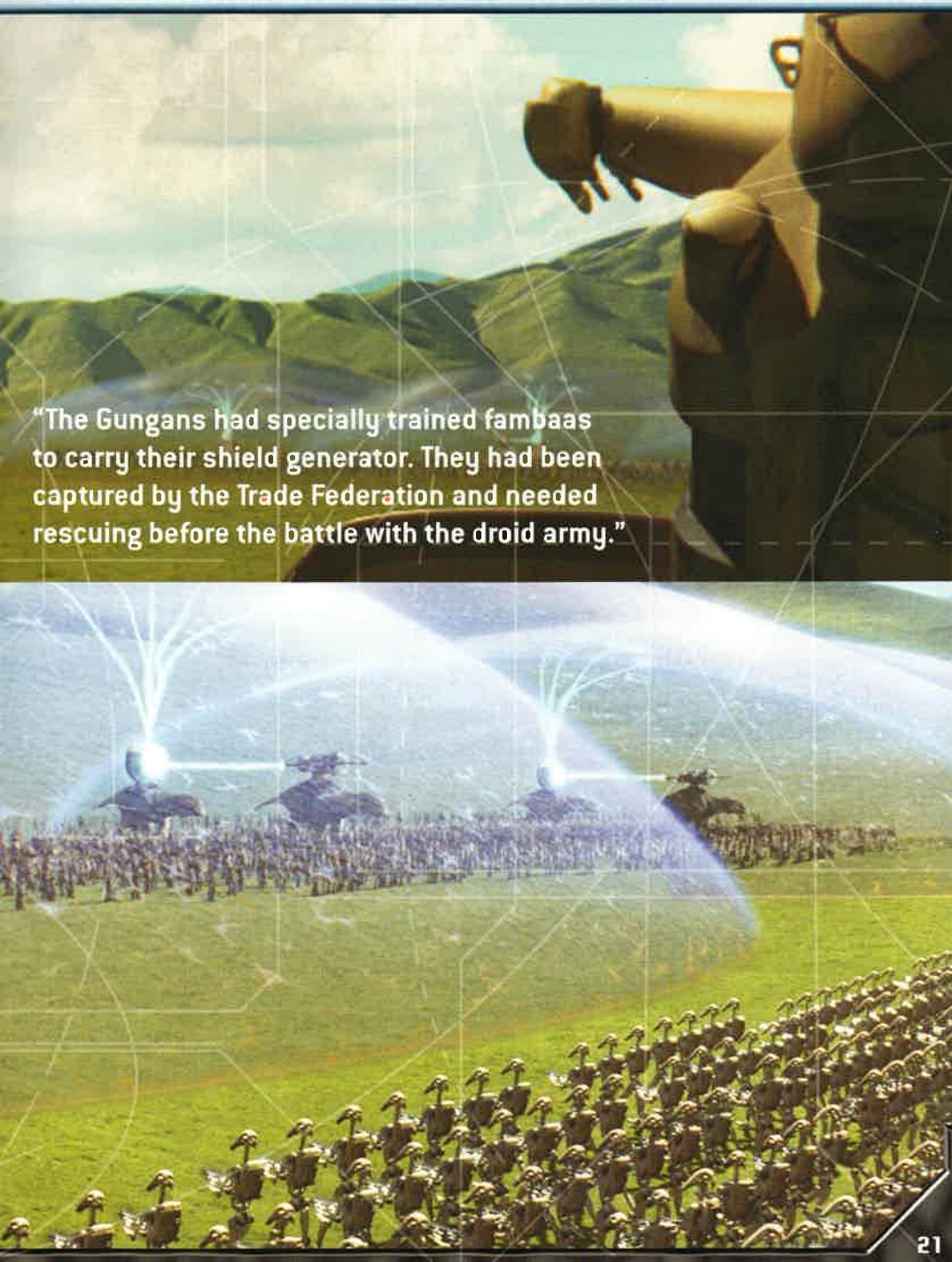
## THE BATTLE OF THE GRASSY PLAINS

**When Boss Rugor Nass, leader of the Gungan people, joined with Queen Amidala of the Naboo to free the planet from the Trade Federation, he offered the services of the Gungan Grand Army to draw out and engage the droid army encamped in and around Theed. There was one problem, however: Nass had no such Grand Army.**

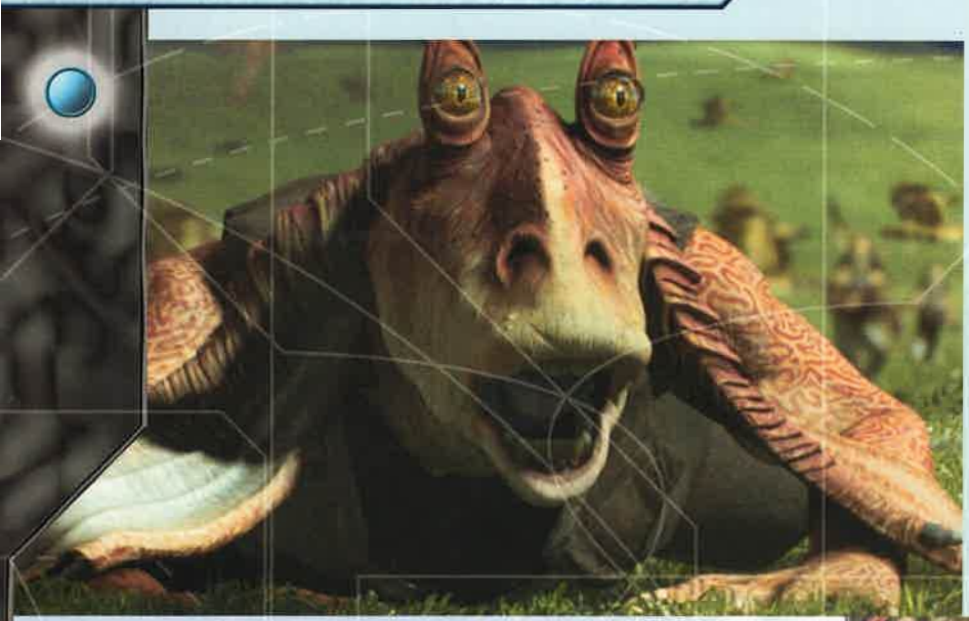
While Amidala gathered her own Security Force volunteers together for the sneak attack on the Theed Palace – an attempt to capture the Neimoidian leaders of the invasion – Boss Nass looked to draw his forces together. The Trade Federation droid army, led by OOM-9, had scattered the Gungans when they had assaulted their settlements, culminating in the devastation of the largely empty Otoh Gunga. Any military equipment that hadn't been destroyed had been impounded, including the trained kaadu and fambaas.

### Gathering the Gungans

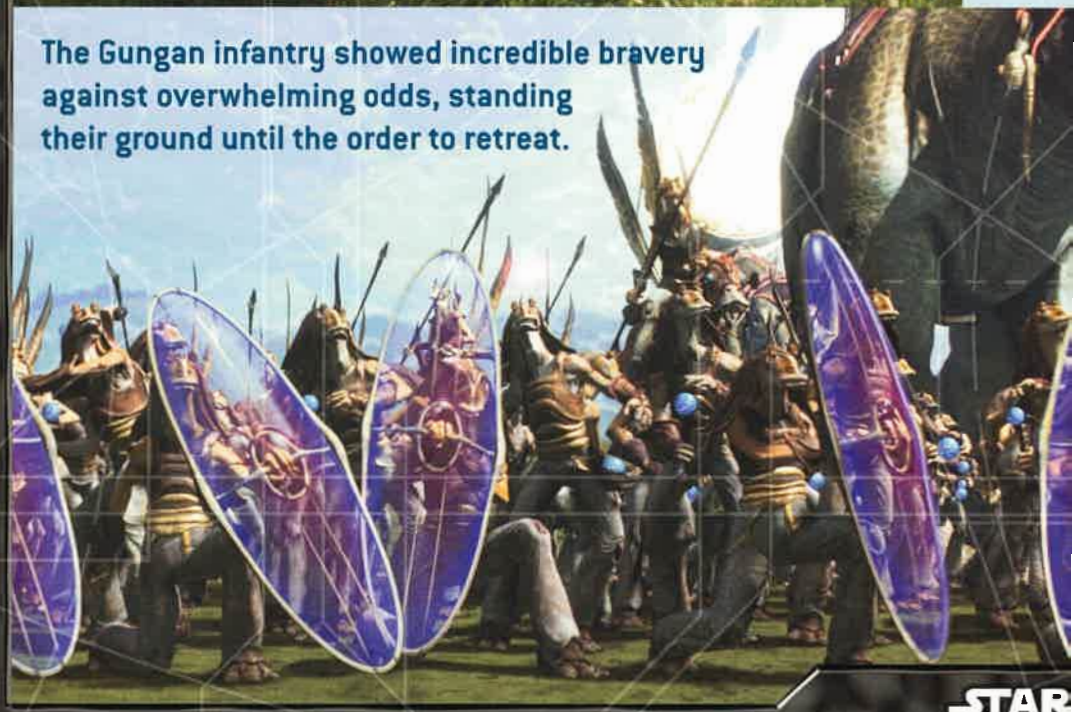
Rugor Nass moved first on the Naboo city of Spinnaker. Formerly a major trading post and spaceport, the city had been devastated by OOM-9's droid army. Nass used what forces he had to retake the ruined city and, thanks to its lakeside location, used it as a rallying point for his scattered warriors. The army was at sufficient strength, but lacked mounts and hardware. Most importantly, the huge fambaas that carried the defence shield were held at Harte Secur. While elements of his army rounded up the kaadu, Nass and his troops took Harte Secur and rescued the fambaas. With the Gungan Grand Army fully armed and ready, Nass and his main Bombad General, Tobler Ceel, drew their plans. The Trade Federation was well aware that the Gungans were on the march and were actively seeking it out. Nass and Ceel made sure the Grand Army could be tracked but not engaged, using Naboo's swampy, misty terrain to reach the Grassy Plains in sight of Theed itself. There, the Gungans drew up their lines and waited for the droids to attack.



"The Gungans had specially trained fambaas to carry their shield generator. They had been captured by the Trade Federation and needed rescuing before the battle with the droid army."



The Gungan infantry showed incredible bravery against overwhelming odds, standing their ground until the order to retreat.



## Did You Know...?

**Though the Gungans sacrificed much, and technically lost the battle, their mission had been a huge success. Queen Amidala's team was able to infiltrate Theed Palace, which had been stripped of much of its security to support the battle against the Gungans. The Neimoidian leaders were caught out and captured, and the invasion brought to an end.**

### Battle of the Grassy Plain

Once the army was out of the swamps and fully assembled, Captain Roos Tarpals gave the order for the energy shield to be activated. As it covered the Grand Army, the Gungan troops watched the brow of the hill ahead. The Trade Federation MTTs and AATs rumbled into view, with the tanks taking up a forward position. OOM-9 immediately ordered the tanks to open fire on the Gungans with their main heavy laser cannon. The blasts rippled the shield, but nothing more. After a few minutes, OOM-9 called a cease-fire.

### Send In The Droids

The Gungans nervously watched as the MTTs opened up. Their droid racks extended, deploying hundreds of dormant battle droids. On an order from the orbiting droid control ship, the B1 droids awoke. Drawing their weapons, they turned and began advancing on the Gungan energy shield. Tarpals turned to Jar Jar Binks: "Ouch time." Personal energy fields were activated, and the catapults and cestas were loaded. The battle droids shouldered through the shield, and the battle was truly joined. The Gungans fought bravely, but they were outgunned and outnumbered. The boomas struck down hundreds of droids, but there were thousands on the field. Then droidekas brought down the Gungan shield. Immediately, Captain Tarpals and the other commanders ordered a retreat. At the same time, the AATs opened fire, moving in as they did so. The droids had won, killing many Gungans and taking others prisoner. Only the destruction of the droid control ship and the deactivation of the entire droid army saved the day.

# THE GUNGANS

## INVENTING A SPECIES

**The theme of technologically obsessed bad guys being overthrown by a more 'primitive' people was part of the *Star Wars* story from the early days, appearing in *Return of the Jedi* and returning with the creation of the Gungans in *Phantom Menace*.**

In Episode I: *The Phantom Menace*, the Gungan people's stand against the mechanical might of the Trade Federation droid armies was envisaged as – in part, at least – a battle between high-tech and low-tech. However, unlike the stone-age Ewoks who appeared in Episode VI: *Return of the Jedi*, the Gungans would use *some* technology. The challenge for the film-makers came in finding a design style that would maintain the innocence of the species while still giving them enough technology to be a worthy foe for the Neimoidian battle droids.

### Grow For Victory!

The decision was made to give the amphibian Gungans an ecological, organic art-nouveau aesthetic, full of 'grown' technology, curved lines and graceful, flowery patterns. They would use animals for land transport, live in ornate bubbles underwater, wear leather, and use technology based on aboriginal cultures from Australia and Africa. Designs were kept asymmetrical – for example, early work on the Gungan catapult produced a weapon looking very much like something invented in medieval Europe, but that was rejected in favour of the more exotic and organic final design.

### Jar Jar The First

What of the Gungan people themselves? The first of them to be designed was Jar Jar Binks. As one of the film's main characters, Binks's development was hugely

## Did you know...?

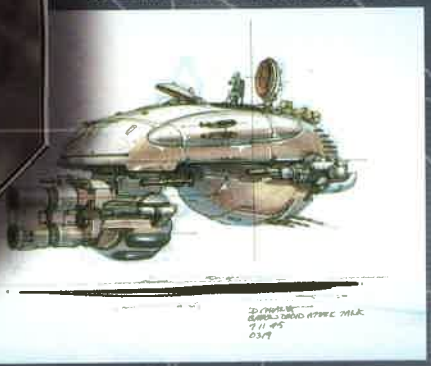
**Various types of clothing and even armour were considered for the Gungans. In one rejected design from September 1996, Gungan warriors wore bulky crab armour. In the end, it was decided that they should wear form-fitting leather. This was to maintain their use of natural products, but also because leather avoided the need for digital animation of the delicate folds and rumples that other cloth produced.**

important. The fact that he was to be a fully digital creation added to the complexity. Concept artist Terryl Whitlatch would often sketch nonsense characters during breaks, and in 1994 one of them, a frog/slug bipedal thing, was spotted by George Lucas. He asked Terryl to develop Jar Jar Binks based on that sketch. Over the next year, Jar Jar slowly evolved, gaining and then losing a long tail, looking like a sea horse, a snail and then a platypus as Whitlatch and Doug Chiang worked on the character. Final concepts for Jar Jar's face were signed off in January 1996, then the full body in February. Every other Gungan then came from Jar Jar, both at concept and digital artwork stages. All the other digitally created Gungans in Episode I began as the Jar Jar character model before they were squished, stretched and otherwise manipulated to become tall or short, fat or thin, male, female or child Gungans.

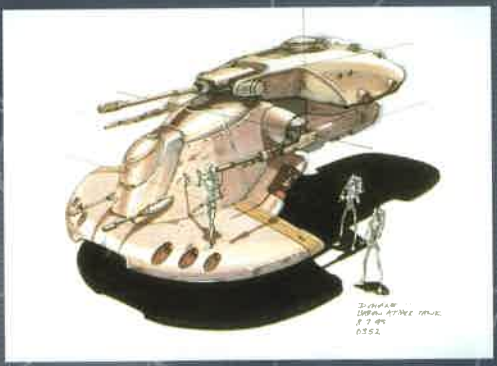
# THE TRADE FEDERATION TANK

## CREATING THE AAT

### THE ARMOURED ASSAULT TANK



1 An early Doug Chiang sketch from 1995, which was rejected as looking too bulky, clumsy and too heavily armoured.



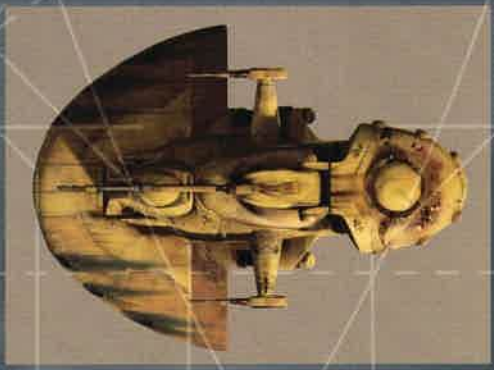
2 In the approved concept sketch from September 1995, the AAT had taken on a more animalistic appearance, with lion-like 'claws' in the side pods.

5 A scene from the Battle of Naboo showing the digital model in action.

6 A full-size mock-up built for filming at Leavesden Studios helped the animators to light their models.

**The original concept for the AAT was for an equivalent to a low-altitude attack helicopter – in effect, a big flying gun. This was in keeping with the vision of a conflict between a technologically advanced military machine swooping on an innocent native population without warning.**

**3** The vision of the conflict between technology and nature was developed in this production painting by Doug Chiang showing the AAT in action.



**4** The concept designs were developed into full computer renderings, as seen in this top-down view of the final digital model of the AAT.

**7** The AAT mock-up was massive, at around 9.75m long. It was supported on three small wheels.

**8** This shot features the full-size mock-up and a model of the Theed hangar, digitally composited.

**1** What strategy was adopted by the Gungans for dealing with the Trade Federation forces occupying Theed?

**2** What is the significance of the crest Senator Amidala is wearing?





**3** Who are the Royal Naboo Security Forces?

**ANSWERS:**

**1.** The Gungans opted to meet the Trade Federation army on the grassy plains outside the city of Theed, leaving the city lightly guarded so that Queen Amidala could infiltrate the Royal Palace.

**2.** The headdress, made from orichalc metal, featured the Flower of Life emblem repeated in a continuous pattern.

**3.** The Royal Naboo Security Forces were a group of volunteers, mostly with relevant experience, much of which had been gained off-world. They were the closest thing Naboo had to a military, though in the main they acted as a police force and participated in ceremonial duties.

# S

## Sando aqua monster

Creature
Episode I

The sando aqua monster of Naboo was often dismissed as a mythical or extinct creature by the Naboo. The Gungan people, who made more regular use of the water-filled caverns and tunnels that honeycombed the planet, knew better. Growing to a potential 200 metres, the sando aqua monster was a rare aquatic mammal about which very little was known. Though the monsters tended to stay in the core of Naboo, there were recorded sightings of the creatures sunning themselves on land or attacking land animals.

## Sant, Rystáll

Character
Episode VI

Abandoned as a baby on Coruscant, the half-human, half-Theelin female was adopted by two Ortolan musicians. Rystáll danced at her adopted parents' recitals. The family became quite famous, and even attended the Galaxies Opera House. However, their fortunes faltered in the anti-alien fervour of the rise of the Empire. Saved from slavery by Lando Calrissian, Rystáll was hired by her parents' friend Max Rebo. Unfortunately, she was effectively enslaved by Jabba the Hutt along with the rest of the Max Rebo band. Surviving Jabba's death, Rystáll later gained fame for her skills as a musician in The Palpatones. She travelled Nar Shadda where she met Shug Ninx, a fellow Theelin, and learned information about her father that caused her to leave the band in search of him.

## Senesca, Zev

Character
Episode V

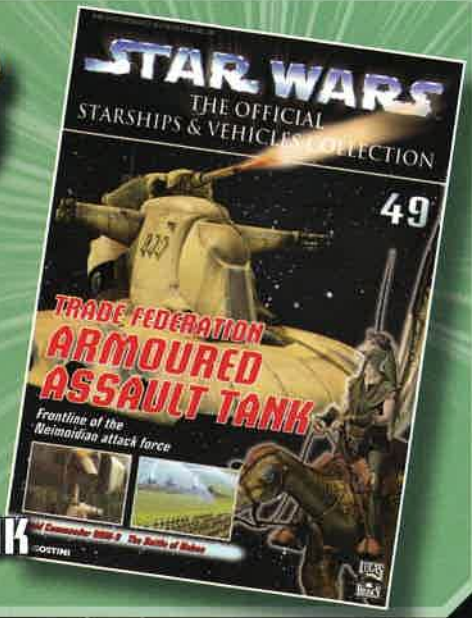
Zev was already a pilot with the Rebel Alliance when his parents were killed after the Empire destroyed Kestic Station, a trading post in the Bestine System. Zev left the Alliance, aggrieved that they had been unable to help his parents who had been supplying them with weapons. He later discovered that one of his own trusted friends had leaked information passed on by Zev, that had led to the Imperial attack. Zev accepted that, in fact, he had effectively been responsible for the information leak, and rejoined the Rebellion. Zev became a member of Rogue Squadron, and was later assigned to Echo Base Hoth. He flew the snowspeeder patrol that rescued Han Solo and Luke Skywalker after their night in the wilderness. Unfortunately, Zev's snowspeeder was destroyed during the Battle of Hoth, and he was killed.

## Shaak

Creature
Episodes I & II

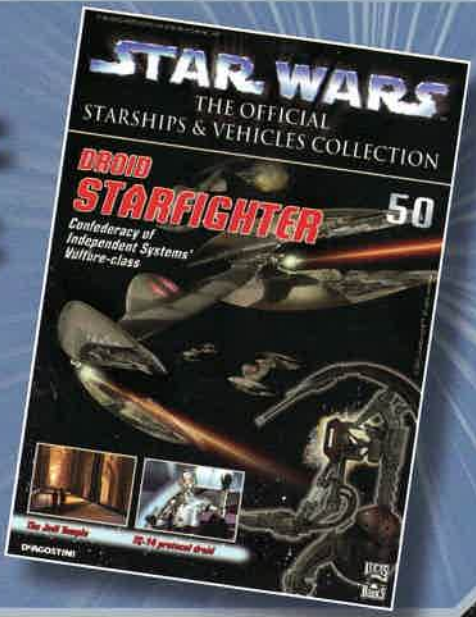
Native to Naboo, shaak were quadruped herbivores that were raised for their meat by both Gungan and Naboo peoples. The wandering herds tended to stay away from swamps as, despite the fact that their large bodies allowed them to float very well, their short, weak legs could rarely get them out of the water.

# IN THIS ISSUE




**WITH ISSUE 49:**
**TRADE FEDERATION ARMOURED ASSAULT TANK**

# IN YOUR NEXT ISSUE




**WITH ISSUE 50:**
**DROID STARFIGHTER**

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